

FISCAL MEMORANDUM

SB 12 – HB 17

April 28, 2008

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENT (005200): Deletes Section 3 of the bill which would have deleted a current requirement that no more than one set of absentee ballot supplies be sent to any one voter.

FISCAL IMPACT OF ORIGINAL BILL:

Increase Local Expenditures* - \$305,000/One-Time
\$965,000/Recurring

FISCAL IMPACT OF BILL WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENT:

Unchanged from the original fiscal note.

Assumptions applied to amendment:

- This bill would result in expanded absentee voting. Over the last two election cycles an average of two percent of all votes were cast by absentee ballot. According to the Division of Elections, the number of absentee votes could increase over time to 15 percent to 25 percent of all votes cast. The cost to local governments would depend upon the size of the county and the number of registered voters voting absentee who would not have voted absentee otherwise, or who would not have voted at all.
- According to the 2000 federal census, there are four large counties (population in excess of 200,000), 41 medium-sized counties (population between 30,000 and 200,000) and 50 small counties (population less than 30,000) in Tennessee.
- The average annualized recurring cost to expand absentee voting in a large county is estimated to be approximately \$50,000 ($\$50,000 \times 4 = \$200,000$); \$15,000 in a medium-sized county ($\$15,000 \times 41 = \$615,000$); and \$3,000 in a small county ($\$3,000 \times 50 = \$150,000$). These costs are for additional temporary staff, benefits, printing, postage, and miscellaneous office supplies.
- The average one-time cost to a large county is estimated to be approximately \$15,000 ($\$15,000 \times 4 = \$60,000$); \$5,000 in a medium-sized county ($\$5,000 \times 41 = \$205,000$); and \$800 in a

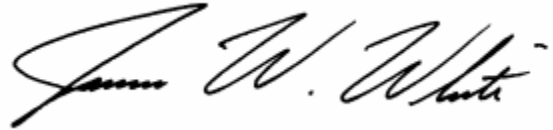
small county (\$800 x 50 = \$40,000). These costs are for additional scanners, computers and miscellaneous office supplies.

- The increase in local government expenditures is an annualized cost. The total increase in recurring expenditures over a two-year election cycle is \$1,930,000.
- Over time there could be a reduction in the number of staff and voting machines required during regular elections if greater numbers of voters elect to vote absentee. Such a reduction cannot be quantified.

*Article II, Section 24 of the Tennessee Constitution provides that: *no law of general application shall impose increased expenditure requirements on cities or counties unless the General Assembly shall provide that the state share in the cost.*

CERTIFICATION:

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James W. White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" written in a smaller, more compact script than the last name "White".

James W. White, Executive Director

/rct